

## COUNTING BIOLOGICAL AGENTS ON BIOLOGICAL GROWTH PLATES

### ABSTRACT

5        The invention is directed to counting techniques for counting biological agents on a biological growth plate or similar medium. In order to automate the counting of biological agents, a biological growth plate is inserted into a biological scanning unit. Upon insertion of the biological growth plate, the biological scanning unit generates an image of the plate. Then, the amount of biological agents that appear in the image, 10 such as a number of bacteria colonies, can be counted or otherwise determined using image processing and analysis routines performed either by the scanning unit or an external computing device, such as a desktop computer, workstation or the like. A variety of counting rules are described herein that can be used to improve the accuracy of automated counts of biological agents on a biological growth plate.